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Gov/Lt. Gov Summer Conversations Tour

Throughout the month of July, Governor Deval Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray will embark on a summer conversation tour across the Commonwealth. These meetings build on the Patrick-Murray Administration's commitment to governing the whole state and encouraging civic engagement in every corner of our Commonwealth.

These public meetings will give residents a chance to ask the Governor and Lieutenant Governor about progress in each of their priority areas - jobs, education, health care, youth violence and discuss other important issues.

Tim Murray Conversation Date

July 15th, 5:00PM: Northampton, Northampton City Hall, City Council Chambers, 212 Main Street, Northampton

Governor Patrick's Conversation Dates

July 15th, 5:00 PM: Lenox, Lilac Park on Main Street, Lenox, Rain Location: Lenox Town Hall

July 21st, 5:00PM: Westport, Town Marina, 2056 Main Road, Westport Point, Rain Location: TBD

July 23rd, Martha's Vineyard, Location and Time TBD

July 26th, Boston, Location and Time TBD

City of Boston Seeks Proposals for Pilot Urban Agriculture Project

The Request-for-Proposals (RFP) for the potential future urban agriculture sites at Tucker, Standish and Glenway Streets in Dorchester has been issued. Please see the press release below for more information and a link to download the RFP. Thanks for your interest in urban agriculture in Boston!

Three Parcels Available in Dorchester to Produce Fresh, Healthy Food for Residents

Mayor Thomas M. Menino has announced that the City of Boston has released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Pilot Urban Agriculture Project. The Project proposes to put three vacant, city-owned properties in Dorchester to productive use for farming, with the goal of producing fresh, healthy food for sale in the community. The RFP seeks proposals from qualified individuals, businesses, and/or organizations to farm these properties, either as for profit or not-for-profit enterprises. Local community members are strongly encouraged to submit proposals. The RFP includes incentives for partnerships between the farmers and local community organizations to encourage farming that is responsive to community needs and interests. "Urban farming is a great way to encourage small scale agricultural entrepreneurship in our city," Mayor Menino said. "It has the capacity to bring fresh fruits and vegetables into neighborhoods and corner stores while teaching Boston families and youth about where their food comes from."

The three properties are located at 23-29 Tucker Street, 131 Glenway Street and 18-24 Standish Street. Initially, each property will be leased based on a rate of \$500 per acre, which based on lot sizes, will be roughly \$125 to \$200 per year for a term of five years. The term may be extended if farming is successful.

The deadline for proposals is August 15, 2011. The RFP package is available at the Department of Neighborhood Development's Bid Counter on the 10th floor at 26 Court Street, Boston. The RFP can also be downloaded by registering at <http://www.cityofboston.gov/dnd/rfp>. A bidders conference is scheduled for July 25, 2011 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the Winter Chambers on the 1st floor at 26 Court Street. Any questions regarding the RFP can be emailed to Jay Lee at jlee.dnd@cityofboston.gov.

Energy Efficiencies for Dairy Operations Workshop at Mapleline Farm – July 21st

Energy Efficiencies for Dairy Operations Workshop, 6:00-8:00 pm at Mapleline Farm, 78 Comins Road, Hadley. Paul Kokoski of Mapleline Farm will lead a tour of his farm and dairy operation. Learn about the energy enhancements he has implemented to improve his business with the help of grant funding from multiple sources. Jess Cook from the Mass Farm Energy Program will be present to share what other local dairy operations have done to improve efficiencies on their farm and to tell you more about the resources available for farmers. Suggested donation is \$5 and snacks will be provided. Please RSVP for refreshments by Tuesday, July 19th to Devon at 413-665-7100 or devon@buylocalfood.org.



MDAR's mission is to ensure the long-term viability of agriculture in Massachusetts. Through its four divisions – Agricultural Conservation & Technical Assistance, Agricultural Markets, Animal Health, and Crop and Pest Services – MDAR strives to support, regulate and enhance the rich diversity of the Commonwealth's agricultural community to promote economically and environmentally sound food safety and animal health measures, and fulfill agriculture's role in energy conservation and production. For more information, visit MDAR's website at mass.gov/agr, and/or follow at twitter.com/agcommishsoares.